

Appl. No. 09/829,059
Amdt. Dated January 19, 2005
Reply to Office action of October 21, 2004
Attorney Docket No. P14682-US1
EUS/J/P/05-3009

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant notes with appreciation the conditional allowance of claim 13. Claim 7 has been rewritten to include the allowable limitations of claim 13 and any intervening claims. Therefore no amendments have been made to narrow the scope of the pending claims or to create any sort of estoppel.

Claim Amendments

The Applicant has amended claims 7, 9 and 18; claims 1-6, 8 and 13 have been canceled; and claims 19-30 have been added. The Applicant respectfully submits no new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 7, 9-12 and 14-30 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Examiner Objections – Specification

The abstract was objected to because of informalities. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for his careful review of the specification. In response, the Applicant has modified the abstract as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner's consideration of the amendments to the abstract is respectfully requested.

Examiner Objections - Claims

Claim 13 was objected to as to being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicant has amended independent Claim 7 by incorporating the allowable limitations of claim 13. Additionally, the Applicant has incorporated the same allowable limitations in new claim 19.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 1-12, and 14-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berg et al. (US 6,680,952 hereinafter Berg) in view of Iwama, et al.

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(US 6,600,735 hereinafter Iwama). In order to expedite allowance of this application, the Applicant has canceled claims 1-6 without prejudice. Therefore, this rejection with respect to these claims is deemed to be moot. The Applicant has amended claims 7 and 9 to better define the intended scope of the claimed invention. Consideration of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 14 – 18 depend directly or indirectly from amended independent claim 7, which now contains the allowable limitations previously found in claim 13. The Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 7.

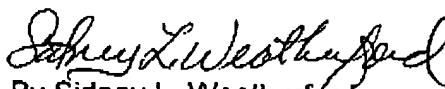
Claims 9-12 and 14-18 recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of amended independent claim 7. Therefore, the allowance of claims 9-12 and 14-18 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,


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